

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Larson Fisher Associates with Kathryn Grover

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date: December 2012

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

21-62A

ORLEANS

EAS.639

Town/City: Eastham

Place: South Eastham

Address: 780 State Highway

Historic Name: Frank B. and Florene B. Lincoln House

Uses: Present: single residence

Original: single residence

Date of Construction: 1913

Source: deeds

Style/Form: Colonial Revival/American 4 Square

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete Block, parged

Wall/Trim: Vinyl Clapboard

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: garage

Major Alterations: none

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: .51 acre

Setting: The house has frontage on State Highway 6 but is otherwise surrounded by single family residential properties.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

780 STATE HIGHWAY

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

This wood-framed house is a classic example of the American Four Square form in its simplest rendition, without extraneous architectural embellishment. It has two-bay front and sides. Only the multi-paned 6-over-6 windows and clapboard siding lend a Colonial Revival stylistic element to the composition. The hipped roof, with minimal overhanging eaves, does not feature a dormer. A full front porch has been enclosed with 8-over-8 of windows atop a kneewall; on the front wall each of the two three-part window have 8-over-8 windows at their center flanked by narrower 4-over-4 windows. The entrance door may be original, moved out to serve as the porch entrance from its original front wall location; its surround incorporates full-length five-light sidelights. The porch roof is hipped as is the one-story rear entrance vestibule. The house has been resided with vinyl clapboard and most of the windows have been replaced fairly recently as indicated by their false muntins. At least one window has been altered to a casement type. The foundation has been parged, but appears to have been constructed of concrete block. A wood deck has been added to the rear of the house.

The house sits on a slight knoll above and east of the State Highway, which it fronts. A two-stall detached garage is located in the rear yard, left (northwest) of the house. The garage matches the architecture of the house. It too has a hipped roof and appears to have retained sliding doors and original wood shingle siding. A lean-to extends along its left (northerly) side.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The house at 780 State Highway was probably built soon after Coast Guard Captain Frank Burnham Lincoln acquired what was then a 2.5-acre tract on May 26, 1913. Born in Eastham in 1884, Lincoln was the son of Sylvester Lincoln (1855-87) and Esther Anna Knowles (1858-1904). His father was the son of master mariner Hinckley Lincoln; his mother was a daughter of Freeman (1823-1909) and Joanna Smith Knowles (1828-95). The land on which 780 State Highway was built very likely belonged in 1820 to Freeman Knowles's father, also Freeman Knowles (1779-1843), who built the house at 1220 State Highway about that time. Several Knowles dwellings on State Highway were probably built on land taken from that original farm, including the home of Edmund Knowles, the son of Freeman I, brother of Freeman II, and uncle of Esther Anna Knowles Lincoln. It appears to have been from Edmond's property that the 780 State Highway tract was subdivided.

The Lincoln family of Eastham had a long association with the sea. Hinckley Lincoln was part owner in several merchant sloops, and Sylvester Lincoln worked as a "surfman" for the Life-Saving Service in Eastham and Orleans but died of malaria when his son Frank was less than three years old. By 1900 he, his mother Esther, and his sister Ada were living in the State Highway home of her father Freeman. By 1910 Frank Lincoln had begun to follow his father's trade: he was a member of the crew of the life-saving station in Rockport, Massachusetts, in that year. In 1911 in nearby Annisquam he married Florene B. Davis, a native of Provincetown then living in Gloucester. The 1913 Gloucester directory notes that Frank Lincoln had "removed to Orleans," where he may have lived briefly while the 780 State Highway house was being built. He already owned land in Eastham by that time: in 1907 his grandfather Hinckley sold him three acres adjoining his own property on the west side of State Highway, south of 780 State Highway, in 1909 he acquired another four acres in South Eastham, and in the same year he sold his share of his father's State Highway house and land, next to his grandfather's property in South Eastham.¹

Lincoln acquired the 780 State Highway land in two deeds from Elizabeth A. Whittemore Gill Knowles, one in her own right as the heir of her husband, the Eastham farmer Nelson Munroe Knowles, and one as the guardian of her minor sons Raymond N. and Charles M. Knowles.² Born in 1858, Nelson M. Knowles was one of the sons of Edmund and Pamela Smith Knowles; a house labeled "E. Knowles" on the 1880 map of Easton was probably his. Nelson was a fisherman and farmer, and he was thirty-eight years old when he married Elizabeth A. Whittemore Gill in 1898; born in Lynn, her first husband, Elmer Gill, died in 1893, two years after their marriage.³ Elizabeth Gill was living in Eastham when she married Nelson Knowles. The couple's son Raymond Nelson Knowles was born in Eastham in 1899, and Charles Munroe Knowles followed in 1902. In April 1903 Nelson Knowles died at the age of forty-four, and by 1910 Elizabeth A. Knowles was living on State Highway with her sons, Elizabeth Gill (her daughter from her first marriage, who was sixteen and a pianist), and her own widowed mother Elizabeth Whittemore. Between 1913 and 1918 Elizabeth Knowles married again and was widowed by 1940, when she was living with her son Raymond and his wife Florence on State Highway.

¹ See deeds to Frank B. Lincoln, 13 July 1907, BCD 289:224, and 2 March 1909, BCD 293:430, and from him, 6 August 1909, BCD 296:238. These Lincoln houses appear in *Images of America-Eastham*, Marilyn C. Schofield and Roberta Cornish/Eastham Historical Society (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2003) p. 15.

² Elizabeth A. Knowles to Frank B. Lincoln, 26 May 1913, BCD 330:203; Elizabeth A. Knowles, guardian of Raymond N. and Charles M. Knowles, minor children of Nelson M. Knowles, to Frank B. Lincoln, 26 May 1913, BCD 326:310. See also Elizabeth A. Edwards, fka Elizabeth A. Knowles; Raymond N. Knowles; Charles M. Knowles, Providence RI, to Frank B. Lincoln, 2 May 1947, BCD 720:93m, which corrects an error in the original deeds' description of the northeast boundary line.

³ Elmer Gill's father Ezekiel was a native of North Eastham. Elmer Gill worked as a railroad foreman in Boston.

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The 2.5-acre lot was bounded on the north by the state highway, on the south by Town Cove, and on the east by land belonging to Elizabeth A. Knowles and other heirs.⁴ Lincoln acquired it for \$200, which indicates clearly that no house stood on the parcel at that time. The house was certainly built by 1926, for assessors' records in that year show Lincoln with three acres, a house valued at \$3,450, a garage, a water system, and land elsewhere in the town. But he was clearly only a part-time resident, as he is not listed in the 1929 Eastham directory and is never shown in the town in any census after 1900. In 1915 he was district superintendent of the twenty-one stations in the Coast Guard's second district, from Plum Island to Wood's Hole, and was based in Provincetown;⁵ in 1920 Lincoln was living with his wife and three children Ida May, Philip, and Marguerite in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. In 1930 he was district commander of the Coast Guard station in South Kingstown, Rhode Island, in 1935 was stationed in Oakland, California, and in 1940 was living at a Coast Guard station in Jacksonville, Florida. In 1930 and 1940 Lincoln is shown without his family in the census, and it may be that his wife Florene and their children lived at 780 State Highway most of the year.

In 1963 Frank Lincoln deeded 780 State Highway to himself and his wife, and he died six years later. In 1986 Florene Lincoln sold the property to current owners Richard E. and Pauline M. Leveille, then of Hudson, Massachusetts.⁶

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PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2012-2013 unless otherwise noted)

⁴ The 2.5-acre tract may have been part of the 11.5-acre homestead of Edmond Knowles described in Edmund L. Knowles, Fall River, to Nelson M. Knowles, 28 February 1898, BCD 271:211; in March 1913 Edmund L. Knowles, Nelson's brother, deeded eight acres of this homestead to Nelson's widow, who appears to have subdivided it and sold part to Frank B. Lincoln.

⁵ *Register of the Officers, Vessels, and Stations of the United States Coast Guard* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1915), 76.]

⁶ Frank B. Lincoln to Frank B. and Florine B. Lincoln, 1 March 1963, BCD 1192:422; Florine B. Lincoln to Richard E. and Pauline M. Leveille, Hudson, 17 April 1986, BCD 5028:39. In 1986 the property was 3.53 acres and is shown on "Plan of Land in Eastham," December 1948, BCP 177:63; it has since been subdivided.

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Aerial view from west (photo courtesy of Bing Maps).



View of garage from the northwest.